



## **Divergent Options** **Assessment Paper Template**

Divergent Options is a non-politically aligned national security website that, in 1,000 words or less, provides unbiased, dispassionate, candid articles that assess a national security situation, present multiple options to address the situation, and articulate the risk and gain of each option.

***Please note that while we assess a national security situation and may provide options, we never recommend a specific option.***

All articles at Divergent Options use a template. For our writers, this template allows them to fit writing into their busy schedule by writing one paragraph or so per day. For our readers, this template makes our articles easy to read when they are on the go.

Below is the template for our Assessment Paper. With our Assessment Paper, a writer identifies a national security situation, assesses its significance, and describes the impact of action or inaction.

***Please send your articles to [submissions@divergentoptions.org](mailto:submissions@divergentoptions.org)***

*Jane Doe has served in Organization A in Country X and Country Y. She presently works at Organization B where she does Z. She can be found on Twitter @address and writes for website dot com. Divergent Options' content does not contain information of an official nature nor does the content represent the official position of any government, any organization, or any group.*

-----Begin Assessment Paper Format-----

**Title:** Assessment of the Threat Posted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). **Note: Titles will always begin with “Assessment of”**

**Date Originally Written:** September 25, 2014.

**Date Originally Published:** September 29, 2014.

**Summary:** If left unchecked, ISIL will establish a safe haven in Iraq and Syria where violent extremists and emerging violent extremists from around the world can congregate, assimilate, receive training, and be dispatched globally to conduct operations targeting civilians. Beyond the conduct of operations, ISIL operatives dispatched worldwide will also be able to establish local cells to expand their influence.

**Note: “Summary” will be five lines of text maximum. We strongly suggest you write your entire article first and then write the summary.**

**Text:** United States President Barack H. Obama withdrew United States forces from Iraq in December 2011[1]. The December 2011 withdraw date was set by President George W. Bush in 2008 when he signed a Status of Forces Agreement with Iraq. Following the departure of United States forces from Iraq, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki pursued a number of policies that made the Sunni population of Iraq, formerly empowered by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, feel marginalized, excluded, and neglected by the Maliki government[2]. The lack of a stabilizing United States presence and Sunni marginalization laid the groundwork for the rise of ISIL. **Note: This part of the article, called “Text,” is what will be counted against the 1,000 word limit.**

### **Endnotes**

[1] Ryan, M. (2016, September 26). Who made the decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq? Retrieved June 23, 2017, from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2016/live-updates/general-election/real-time-fact-checking-and-analysis-of-the-first-presidential-debate/who-made-the-decision-to-withdraw-u-s-troops-from-iraq/?utm\\_term=.7694d4af3b1b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2016/live-updates/general-election/real-time-fact-checking-and-analysis-of-the-first-presidential-debate/who-made-the-decision-to-withdraw-u-s-troops-from-iraq/?utm_term=.7694d4af3b1b)  
**Note: We prefer APA format for citations, which can be easily done via Citation Machine.**

[2] Something Else in APA Format

-----End Assessment Paper Format-----